Citizenship Education in Portugal

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The short story of democracy in Portugal 1

- **1910** – republican revolution, followed by intense social and political crisis, including involvement in WW1

- **1926** – instauration of a military regime of fascist inspiration

- **1960** – colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau

- **1974** – military revolution that restored democracy, the “carnation revolution” and its 3Ds: democracy, decolonization and development
The short story of democracy in Portugal 2

- 1974/76 – revolutionary period, the last socialist revolution in Europe
- 1976/85 – gradual consolidation of democratic regime
- 1985 – entrance in the EEC: “Europe worked as a buffer for the loss of the empire”
- 1985/… intense socio-economic and cultural changes and development particularly noticeable in areas where underdevelopment was more evident, such as education and health
Evolution of citizenship (?) education

1st Republic (1910-1926)
- Civic and Moral Education

Dictatorship (1926-1974)
- emphasis on God, Fatherland and the Family (a crucifix is mandatory in each classroom)
- Moral and Religious Education (after 1947)
- strictly authoritarian climate in the schools
- lowest mandatory education in Europe (4 years until 1968)
- two track system (lyceum and technical schools)
- in the lyceums, a course of Administrative and Political Organization of the Nation
Evolution of citizenship (?) education

- Revolutionary period (1974-1976)
  - education explicitly assumes citizenship education as a goal, within the context of a “democratic and socialist society”
  - elimination of the two-track system - comprehensive system until grade 9
  - community service strategies in basic and secondary education, valuing students’ intervention in the community (*Civic Polytechnic Education* and *Student Civic Service*)
  - course of Introduction to Politics in secondary education

*intense criticism: risks of ideological inculcation*
Evolution of citizenship (?) education

- **Stabilization period (1976-1986)**
  - absence of explicit concerns with citizenship issues
  - regulation of students’ associations in secondary schools

- **Entrance in the EU (1985/...)**
  - 1986 Education Act
    - assuming citizenship and democratic participation as explicit goals of education
    - creation of an area of Personal and Social Education (PSE), similar to other EU experiences, under the influence of the community of educational sciences and the recognition that the schools should play an active role in the promotion of democratic citizenship
      - topics: civic participation, environmental education, consumerism, family and sex issues, health education, ...
Evolution of citizenship (?) education

- Curricular Reform 1989
  - extension of compulsory education (9 years)

- PSE is the object of an intense debate
  - PSE defined as a cross-curricular goal, the object of a project area, and of a specific subject alternative to Moral and Religious Education
  - conservative vs. emancipatory perspectives of PSE in dispute
  - complete failure of implementation and generalization after 1992
Evolution of citizenship (?) education

- **late 90’s – the “citizenship education” revolution in Europe**
  - the “European curriculum”: no more PSE, CE!

- **1998**
  - citizenship is assumed as the ultimate goal of education

- **2001 Curricular Reorganization**
  - creation of a mandatory curricular space of Civic Education and a Project Area from grades 1 to 9
  - any teacher can be involved (does not depend on specific training), preferably the class tutor
  - very broad guidelines, no specific programme
  - a curricular space, not a subject
Evolution of citizenship (?) education

- Civic education

"the privileged space for citizenship education, aiming the development of students' civic conscience as a fundamental element in the process of forming responsible, critical, active and intervening citizens, appealing, namely, to the interchange of the experiences students live and their individual and collective participation in the life of the class, the school and the community" [article 5, 3c]).

"is not the responsibility of one teacher or one subject, but crosses every knowledge [domains] and every situations lived in the school (...) [involving] the work in the various curricular subjects and areas. Aspects such as health education, sex education, traffic education or environmental education, among others, should be considered both in the non-disciplinary curricular areas and within the various subjects" (Abrantes, 2001)
Evolution of citizenship (?) education

- The implementation of civic education
  - successful generalisation from grades 1 to 9
  - no apparent dispute on the meaning and goals of CE
  - publication of several textbooks, but no information of how frequently used
  - only episodic case-studies
    - emphasis on interpersonal dimensions of “living in a society”, such as social skills, conflict resolution, ...
    - apparent lack of a political focus
    - no clear relationship with the Project Area that could stress action and involvement in the school or the community
What does research tell us on the influence of school and youth citizenship conceptions and practices?

IEA Civic Education Study – national representative samples of students from grades 8 (n=3271), 9 (n=3219) and 11 (n=2795)

Azevedo & Menezes – cohort sequential longitudinal study of adolescents in grades 9, 10 and 11 (n=1299)
Relevance of politics
IEA Civic Education Study 1999-2000

- low levels of political interest
- low levels of trust in politicians and in the responsiveness of the government
- low levels of trust in political institutions, but high towards schools
- willingness to become politically involved in the future, that increases with age, but mainly regarding passive-conventional or social activities
- low levels of current participation in civil society
- discuss politics mainly with parents, very rarely with teachers
What did you learn at school?

IEA Civic Education Study 1999-2000

- to be concerned about what happens in other countries
- to cooperate in a group
- to understand people with different ideas
- to protect the environment
- to solve community problems
- to be a patriotic and loyal citizen
- the importance of voting

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Perceptions of classroom climate
IEA Civic Education Study 1999-2000

- Teachers value learning of facts and dates
- Rote learning is a good strategy for a good grade
- Students work with textbooks
- Teacher speaks and students take notes
- Teachers present different perspectives
- Teachers encourage the discussion of controversial issues
- Students bring current events to discuss in class
- Students can express opinions different from peers
- Teachers respect students' opinions
- Students are encouraged to have an opinion
- Students can disagree with the teacher
An adult who is a good citizen...

IEA Civic Education Study 1999-2000

- obeys the law
- part activ promote HRs
- part activ protect environment
- part activ help the poor
- follows the news on the media
- respects the government
- votes in every election
- is willing to serve in the military
- is willing to disobey a law that violates HRs
- demonstrates against an unjust law
- works hard
- knows the country’s history
- becomes a member of a political party
- participates in political discussions
- is patriotic and loyal
Perceptions of learning climate
Azevedo & Menezes (2004/08) – cohort sequential longitudinal study

- 1st wave (n=1299)
- 2nd wave (n=948)
- 3rd wave (n=602)

Learning about science
Learning to communicate
Learning to speak out
Learning about the world
Most significant part experience
Azevedo & Menezes (2004/08) – cohort sequential longitudinal study

1st wave (n=1299)
- sports/music/religious (yellow)
- social/solidarity (blue)
- political party (gray)
- student council (green)

2nd wave (n=948)
- sports/music/religious (yellow)
- social/solidarity (blue)
- political party (gray)
- student council (green)

3rd wave (n=602)
- sports/music/religious (yellow)
- social/solidarity (blue)
- political party (gray)
- student council (green)
Changes and ≠ in civic involvement
Azevedo & Menezes (2004/08) – cohort sequential longitudinal study

- decreasing tendency to be involved across adolescence

- gender differences
  - across time, girls tend to become more involved (mainly in students councils and political parties) and boys tend to decrease their level of participation
  - family and school climates tend to be more significant predictors of political development for girls (but the relevance of family decreases with age)
  - out-of-school participation experiences tend to be more significant predictors of political development for boys

- participation experiences are a relevant predictor of dispositions for future political engagement
Future research goals

- systematic and in-depth analysis of CE practices in schools
  - both in- and out-of-class dimensions, with a particular attention to whole school projects that value students active participation in and out-of-school - “students as citizens”

- further exploration of the role of family, school and out-of-school participation contexts in the promotion of youth citizenship conceptions and practices
  - exploration of processes that might account for the influence of the family and the school
  - quality of participation experiences: what in participation accounts for positive impact?
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